



EU Newsletter 2026 – I

Spring

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EU Research and Development News



Discover recent updates from Brussels in this part of the EU Newsletter.

EU Policy Updates

[Official statements on the upcoming 10th EU Framework Program for Research and Innovation \(FP10\) and the European Competitiveness Fund \(ECF\)](#)

Negotiations on the EU Multiannual Financial Framework have been ongoing in the Council and the European Parliament since September 2025, and are expected to continue until 2027. During this period, governments and other institutions can contribute to the discussions by submitting position papers.

In January 2026, [the European Court of Auditors \(ECA\) presented two opinions on the European Commission's legislative proposals for FP10 and the ECF](#). Among other things, the auditors call for a stronger alignment with EU policy priorities and greater transparency, traceability and accountability of expenditure. The ECA recommends that EU legislators take these points into account in the ongoing negotiations. These are the first in a series of opinions that the ECA will issue on the proposals for the EU's 2028–2034 budget.

The **German government has also responded to the EU Commission's proposals** and recently published a [position paper outlining Germany's expectations for FP10](#). The German government is particularly committed to: identifying and supporting the most excellent ideas; strengthening Europe's strategic competitiveness and resilience through targeted collaborative research; improving cooperation in Europe to make projects simpler, more agile and more effective; overcoming transfer deficits to ensure that research results reach the market and society more quickly; supporting disruptive business models through coherent innovation funding; increasing Europe's attractiveness for talent and investment; and securing access to global markets and knowledge.

Measures to incentivise and simplify defence investments in the EU

On 18 December 2025, the European Council formally adopted the regulation to incentivise defence- and dual-use-related investments in the EU budget in order to implement the [ReArm Europe Plan](#). The following EU programmes are affected and are listed in the [Council's press release](#): Horizon Europe, the European Defence Fund (EDF), the Digital Europe Programme (DEP), the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) and the Connecting Europe Facility.

While Horizon Europe's overall civilian nature is maintained, **the EIC Accelerator funding instrument will also support dual-use and defence-related start-ups and expand equity funding under adjusted conditions**. A corresponding update to the EIC Work Programme 2026 is expected shortly. In addition, the agreed changes extend the DEP's funding activities to dual-use technologies and enable Ukraine to be associated with the EDF.

ERC News

New information on ERC Plus Grants

More specific information on the **ERC Plus Grant call 2026** is now available in the **updated [2026 Work Programme](#)**. This new funding line is aimed at highly ambitious projects that go beyond the scope of regular ERC grants. Outstanding researchers at all career stages, in all disciplines and of any nationality are eligible to apply. The maximum grant amount is a **lump sum of €7 million for a project duration of four to seven years**, covering all direct and indirect costs. Principal investigators must devote at least 30% of their working time to the project and spend at least 50% of their working time in an EU Member State or a country associated with the EU Framework Programme.

The call for proposals is scheduled to be published on 2 June 2026. The **submission deadline will be 2 September 2026**. Around 30 ERC Plus Grants are planned to be awarded in 2026.

MSCA News

Updated Financial Guide for MSCA Projects

The German National Contact Point for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) has released an updated version of its [Guide on Financial management for MSCA Projects](#). The guide is written in German and covers the Work Programmes for the periods 2024–2025 and 2026–2027.

Cluster News

Open topic calls in Work Programme 2026–2027

The 2026–2027 cluster work programmes under Horizon Europe now include **open topics** alongside the regular prescriptive calls, **allowing for greater flexibility**. In these cases, *“the expected outcomes or impacts are clearly defined, but the pathways and methods to achieve them remain open-ended”*. The evaluation criteria for proposals remain unchanged.

EIC News

EIC Pathfinder Open 2026

The European Commission is providing around €166 million for high-risk, interdisciplinary research projects aimed at developing radical future technologies in the **EIC Pathfinder Open Call 2026**. From **5 February to 11 May 2026** consortia of at least three independent partners from three EU or associated countries can apply for up to €4 million per project.

Association of Third Countries to Horizon Europe

Japan:

The European Union and Japan successfully concluded negotiations on **Japan's association with Horizon Europe (2021-2027)**. The corresponding agreement is expected to be signed in the course of this year. However, thanks to a transitional arrangement, Japanese organisations may already receive funding as beneficiaries or coordinators from the 2026–2027 work programme onwards. This association is **limited to Pillar II of Horizon Europe**.

Calls for Proposals

This section contains a selection of open and forthcoming calls from various EU funding programmes. The European Commission publishes the calls in the **Funding & Tender Opportunities Portal (FTOP)**. Do not hesitate to contact us at euresearch@uni-potsdam.de if you need further information about these or other international calls for proposals.

Horizon Europe

European Research Council (ERC)

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
ERC Proof of Concept 2026	20/01/2026	17/03/2026
Open		17/09/2026

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
ERC Plus Grants 2026 Forthcoming	02/06/2026	02/09/2026
ERC Advanced Grants 2026 Forthcoming	28/05/2026	27/08/2026

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
MSCA Cofund 2026 Open	16/12/2025	08/04/2026
MSCA Staff Exchanges 2026 Open	16/12/2025	16/04/2026
MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2026 Forthcoming	09/04/2026	09/09/2026
MSCA Doctoral Networks 2026 Forthcoming	28/05/2026	24/11/2026

Research Infrastructures

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
HORIZON-INFRA-2026-01: Research Infrastructures 2026 Forthcoming	10/03/2026	16/06/2026

Clusters

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
Cluster 1: Health		
HORIZON-HLTH-2026-01: Health Single Stage Open	10/02/2026	16/04/2026
Cluster 2: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society		
HORIZON-CL2-2026-01: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society 2026 Forthcoming	12/05/2026	23/09/2026
Cluster 3: Civil Security for Society		
HORIZON-CL3-2026-01: Civil Security for Society 2026 Forthcoming	06/05/2026	05/11/2026
Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space		

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
HORIZON-CL4-2026-01: INDUSTRY Open	06/01/2026	21/04/2026
HORIZON-CL4-2026-02-two-stage: INDUSTRY-two-stage Open	16/12/2025	17/03/2026 13/10/2026
HORIZON-CL4-2026-03: SPACE Forthcoming	10/03/2026	03/09/2026
HORIZON-CL4-2026-04: DIGITAL Open	15/01/2026	15/04/2026
HORIZON-CL4-2026-05: DIGITAL Open	15/01/2026	15/04/2026
Cluster 5: Climate, Energy and Mobility		
HORIZON-CL5-2026-03: BATTERIES and ENERGY Open	18/12/2025	31/03/2026
HORIZON-CL5-2026-04-two-stage: ENERGY Open	18/12/2025	31/03/2026 20/10/2026
HORIZON-CL5-2026-05: MOBILITY Open	18/12/2025	14/04/2026
HORIZON-CL5-2026-06-two-stage: MOBILITY Open	18/12/2025	14/04/2026 08/10/2026
HORIZON-CL5-2026-07: CLIMATE Open	18/12/2025	15/04/2026
HORIZON-CL5-2026-08-two-stage: CLIMATE Open	18/12/2025	15/04/2026 08/10/2026
HORIZON-CL5-2026-09: BATTERIES and ENERGY Forthcoming	05/05/2026	15/09/2026
HORIZON-CL5-2026-10: BATTERIES and ENERGY Forthcoming	04/06/2026	08/10/2026
HORIZON-CL5-2026-11: ENERGY Forthcoming	04/08/2026	01/12/2026
Cluster 6: Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment		
HORIZON-CL6-2026-01 Forthcoming	17/04/2026	17/09/2026
HORIZON-CL6-2026-02 Open	14/01/2026	14/04/2026
HORIZON-CL6-2026-03 Open	14/01/2026	15/04/2026
HORIZON-CL6-2026-04 Forthcoming	25/08/2026	26/11/2026
HORIZON-CL6-2026-01-two-stage Open	12/02/2026	14/04/2026 23/09/2026
HORIZON-CL6-2026-02-two-stage Open	12/02/2026	14/04/2026 15/09/2026

European Innovation Ecosystems (EIE)

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
HORIZON-EIE-2026-03: Interconnected Innovation Ecosystems Forthcoming	09/06/2026	22/09/2026

Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Agenda (WIDERA)

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
HORIZON-WIDERA-2026-01: Teaming Synergies Forthcoming	23/04/2026	24/09/2026
HORIZON-WIDERA-2026-02: Twinning Open	08/01/2026	09/04/2026
HORIZON-WIDERA-2026-03: Hop-on Facility Open	13/01/2026	24/09/2026
HORIZON-WIDERA-2026-04: Research Management Facility Forthcoming	23/04/2026	24/09/2026
HORIZON-WIDERA-2026-05: ERA Fellowships Forthcoming	09/04/2026	09/09/2026
HORIZON-WIDERA-2026-06: Enhancing the European R&I system Open	10/12/2025	12/03/2026

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Missions

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
HORIZON-MISS-2026-01: Supporting the implementation of the Adaption to Climate Change Mission Open	04/02/2026	23/09/2026
HORIZON-MISS-2026-02: Supporting the implementation of the Cancer Mission Open	10/02/2026	15/09/2026
HORIZON-MISS-2026-03: Supporting the implementation of the Restore our Ocean and Waters Mission Open	04/02/2026	23/09/2026
HORIZON-MISS-2026-04: Supporting the implementation of the Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission Open	04/02/2026	08/10/2026
HORIZON-MISS-2026-05: Supporting the implementation of the Soil Deal for Europe Mission Open	04/02/2026	23/09/2026

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
HORIZON-MISS-2026-05-two-stage: Supporting the implementation of the Soil Deal for Europe Mission Open	12/02/2026	14/04/2026 15/09/2026
HORIZON-MISS-2026-06: Joint Call between the Soil Deal for Europe Mission and the Adaption to Climate Change Mission Open	04/02/2026	23/09/2026

Horizontal Activities

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
HORIZON-CID-2026-01: R&I in Support of the Clean Industrial Deal Open	18/12/2025	15/09/2026
HORIZON-RAISE-2026-01: AI in Science Open	06/01/2026	21/04/2026

European Innovation Council (EIC)

Call	Opening Date	Deadline for proposals
EIC Pathfinder Open 2026 Open	05/02/2026	12/05/2026
EIC Pathfinder Challenge 2026 – 1: Advanced Materials for Miniaturised Energy Harvesting Systems Forthcoming	TBA	28/10/2026
EIC Pathfinder Challenge 2026 – 2: Biotechnology for Healthy Ageing Forthcoming	TBA	28/10/2026
EIC Pathfinder Challenge 2026 – 3: Deep Reasoning, Abstraction & Planning towards trustworthy Cognitive AI Systems Forthcoming	TBA	28/10/2026
EIC Transition 2026 Forthcoming	TBA	16/09/2026
EIC Advanced Innovation Challenge 2026 – 1: Accelerating Physical AI Forthcoming	TBA	26/02/2026 18/06/2027
EIC Advanced Innovation Challenge 2026 – 2: Translating Disruptive New Approach Methodologies (NAMs) into Practice Forthcoming	TBA	26/02/2026 18/06/2027

Erasmus+

Below you find a list of the current Erasmus+ calls for proposals that are relevant for higher education institutions.

Key Action 2	Deadline for proposals
<p>Policy Experimentations Call 2026</p> <p>Topics covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic 1: Digital Education Content: Success factors in decision making and use by teachers, trainers and school/institution leaders • Topic 2: Digital Education: Public private partnerships for ethical design, development and use of artificial intelligence tools in education and training • Topic 3: Digital Education: AI-powered personalised learning pathways for basic skills • Topic 4: Micro-credentials – focus on ecosystems • Topic 5: School Education: STEM Education Centres • Topic 6: School Education: Proficiency in basic skills • Topic 7: Vocational Education and Training: Developing basic skills in VET • Topic 8: Vocational Education and Training: Improving transparency and recognition of VET qualifications • Topic 9: Adult Education: Support to the Regional Skills Partnerships in the Pact for Skills • Topic 10: Adult Education: Motivation in motion: Empowering adults to up- and reskilling 	08/04/2026
<p>Policy experimentation: Erasmus+ scholarship</p>	28/05/2026

The calls are published in the [Funding & Tender Opportunities Portal \(FTOP\)](#). Applications must be submitted electronically through the FTOP. The [Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#) provides the details of each action (aims, eligible organisations, budget, duration, etc.).

Further Erasmus+ calls (e.g., Cooperation Partnerships, Capacity Building Projects, Erasmus Mundus Action and Jean Monnet Actions) are expected to be launched in autumn 2026.

Funding of travel costs for the preparation of Erasmus+ projects through the NA DAAD

The National Agency of the German Academic Exchange Service (NA DAAD) provides funding to cover travel expenses related to the preparation of Erasmus+ cooperation projects. Detailed information about the application process is available on [the website of the NA DAAD](#).

European Partnerships and Other EU Co-Funded Programmes

Joint Call Title	Network	Opening Date	Deadline Pre-proposal	Deadline Full-proposal
BE READY Joint Transnational Call (JTC) 2026 The aim is to improve understanding of the pandemic potential of emerging pathogens, elucidate the pathophysiology induced by these pathogens and develop innovative medical countermeasures. Open	European Partnership for Pandemic Preparedness – BE READY	19/01/2026	13/04/2026	20/08/2026

European Structural Funds for Universities in the State of Brandenburg

We advise you to the funding opportunities in the Federal State of Brandenburg and support you in project and cost planning as well as the completion of the necessary cooperation agreements. Information on funding schemes is available [here](#) in German. If you need information in English, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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EU Publications

Work Programmes for Horizon Europe Published

On 11 December 2025 the European Commission published the **Horizon Europe work programmes for 2026–2027**, covering the final calls under the current EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. The work programmes are now available for **Research Infrastructures**, the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)**, all **Pillar II clusters**, **European Innovation Ecosystems (EIE)**, **Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area (WIDERA)**, the **EU Missions**, and the **New European Bauhaus**. In addition, a **new work programme on Horizontal Activities** has been introduced, focusing on strategically important areas such as the EU’s **AI ecosystem** and the **Clean Industrial Deal**. The programmes are available on the European Commission’s [website](#) as well as on the [Funding & Tenders Portal](#).

Furthermore, in January 2026 the [updated ERC Work Programme](#) was published. Among other novelties, it introduces the new “ERC Plus” funding scheme and provides more specific information on the “Proof-of-Concept” call.

EC Guidance on Gender Equality Plans

The European Commission has [published guidance](#) on how the elements of a gender equality plan (GEP) can be implemented in practice. This guidance is intended to assist with any audits of GEPs, but it can also be used for their preparation. Five pages are devoted to the mandatory criteria and one page deals with the non-mandatory but recommended elements of a GEP.

EU Projects at the University of Potsdam

The University of Potsdam has so far obtained funding for 30 projects in Horizon Europe. A complete list of EU projects can be consulted on the [website of the UP](#).

New Projects

Mathematician **Prof. Dr. Alexandra Carpentier** is researching what is known as unsupervised learning, an area of AI in which patterns are derived from unlabelled data. Prof. Carpentier has recently been awarded a **Consolidator Grant from the European Research Council (ERC) for her project “Statistical Optimality and Computational Efficiency: batch and sequential unsupervised learning under additional structure and sampling constraints” (SOCE)**. This project addresses the challenge of improving the efficiency and comprehensibility of unsupervised learning in artificial intelligence. The key objective lies in bridging the gap between statistical performance and computational efficiency. SOCE will receive €1.97 million in funding and will run for five years.

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Upcoming Events

Horizon Europe

Date/Time	Event	Place	Organisation
11/03/2026	Recht und Finanzen in Horizont Europa: Lump-Sum-Projekte (in German) → Link to the event page/registration	Online	NKS RuF
11/03/2026 10:00 – 12:00	Turning knowledge into value: European tools and valorisation practices → Link to the event page/registration	Online	Inspiring ERA

Date/Time	Event	Place	Organisation
04-16/03/2026	2027er Topics im Überblick – Missionen (in German) → Link to the event page/registration	Online	NKS Bio
18/03/2026 10:00	Horizon Europe Research Infrastructures info day → Link to the event page/registration	Online	EU R&I
26/03/2026 10:00 – 12:00	Neuerungen im DESCA-Modell für Konsortialverträge in Horizont Europa (in German) → Link to the event page/registration	Online	NKS R&F

Erasmus+

Date/Time	Event	Place	Organisation
12/03/2026	Online Info Session: New Erasmus+ scholarships Call for Proposals → Link to the event page/registration	Online	EACEA

About Us

EU Research Funding

In Dezernat 1 you find guidance on EU Research Funding in the following ways:

Consultancy (pre-award support)	Application (pre-award support)	Management (post-award support)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the right funding for your research in Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ • Organization of workshops and information events • Support through local, regional, national and international networks • Other information (e.g., success rates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative issues • Formal assessment of the proposal • Funding & Tenders Portal • Detailed feedback on the structure and formal issues of the proposal • Elaboration and checking of the budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and signature of the Grant Agreement • Elaboration and signature of the Consortium Agreement • Coordination and support for the administrative and financial management of Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects

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